

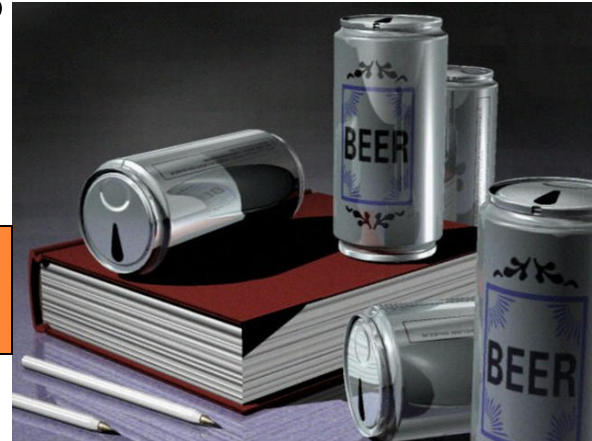


# **EXAMINING WHICH FACTORS INFLUENCE THE DRINKING CULTURE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES**

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Spring 2009  
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# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Every college has a drinking culture, but is the drinking culture the same at every campus?
- What social factors influence the drinking culture on college campuses?



# Binge Drinking



- The National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking that brings a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 grams percent or above. (Typically: men=5drinks women=4 time=2hours)
- College students are more likely to engage in heavy episodic drinking than other individuals in the same age group, and the prevalence of such alcohol consumption on campus does not show any sign of decrease
- Harvard School of Public Health and Alcohol Survey.



# SIGNIFICANCE

- Drinking will always be apart of the college environment, but the unhealthy and sometimes **fatal results of binge drinking need to be addressed**. My research will give a look at just how this issue can be addressed.



# Existing Literature and Resources

- Binge: What Your College Student Wont Tell You. Seaman, Barret
- Harvard School of Public Health Alcohol Survey
- A Call to Action:changing the culture of drinking at US colleges by the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov))



# METHODOLOGY

- Took a **ethnographic** approach while studying three different colleges all of similar demographics: **Trinity College**, **Wesleyan University** and **Connecticut College**.
- Conducted 8 interviews with Trinity students when they had not been drinking.
- Observed the activities of college students drinking in different environments. (eg. Frats, off-campus pub, on campus pub, dorms)
- Engaged in informal conversation with students.



# THEMES

- **Student Perception:** International vs American
- **Policy**
- **Social Structure**



# STUDENT PERCEPTION

- The research literature shows, student perceptions of their own binge drinking **does not match up** to that of the perception/acceptance their own peers hold of them.
- The interviews and conversations held with students showed a dramatic difference between the perceptions of college drinking when it came to that of **International students** and **American students**.





# Student Perception cont...

## International

*“Well, when I arrived here I was a little **confused** with drinking here...”*

- *“...we would grab a bottle of drink or whatever and start drinking but like not like, lets chug it, we would **never chug**”*
- *“It’s a lot different, at home...people **don’t drink to get drunk**”*

## American

- *How are you drinking, “It varies I guess, its like **games** or take **shots**”*
- *“Start off pre-gaming in the room taking some shots and mixed drinks”*



# Policy

## Trinity&Wesleyan

Trinity: personal observations over the past 4 years.

Wesleyan: “Leading up to warmer weather, the WSA would like to remind students who are of age that they are allowed to drink outside on campus property, but there are restrictions and limitations...Be safe, have fun, and if you’re of age, drink responsibly. Let’s have a great spring!”

## Connecticut

### Field note Observations:

- Campus Safety present in student lounge.
- Pub set-up.
- Conversation with students.



# Social Structure

The social structures of a college, and lack there of, plays a vital role in creating the drinking atmosphere for that college.

## Social Structures

Trinity: Fraternities, Dorms, Quad

Wesleyan: Fraternities, Dorms

Connecticut: Campus Pub, Dorms, Student Lounge



# Social Structure cont...

- Taking a closer at Trinity College...
- Fraternities on campus DOMINATE the night life.
- Characteristic of fraternities late night:  
-exclusive –drinking –music –dancing –

Why do you go to frats? “Cause that’s the only social scene on campus”



# CONCLUSION

- The social structures along with the policy of the school have the most influence on creating the drinking environment for its college campus.
- The drinking culture of American and International students differ.



# POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Lowering the Drinking age
  - amethyst initiative
- Providing additional social space on campus

